

Estate Planning and the Veterans Administration

Voluntary Service at the VA was established not only to manage volunteers, but donations that are given to benefit United States veterans.

WHAT IS NEEDED: Our veterans have many more needs than are funded by the Federal government, and we are very aware of them at the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System. Such needs are legion, but common themes present themselves. Frequently veterans present to our medical facilities as homeless, destitute, or with families that are in financial distress as they struggle with their loved one's illness. Your donations enable the VA to support a veteran while he gets back on his feet, pay for the first rental on an independent apartment, or help support families who must temporarily stay in the area while their loved one is in treatment at our facilities. While in treatment, our veterans benefit from therapeutic outings, social events, and bedside visitations which lift their morale and give them the strength to pursue a normal lifestyle once again. Thousands of our veterans benefit from donations which support bus tokens or taxi vouchers which enable them to make the trip to our facility from areas in our far catchment areas. Comfort items such as telephone cards are also in high demand, as hospitalized veterans are often desperate to speak with far away loved ones, but the VA cannot fund long-distance phone calls... all of these necessary components of modern life in Los Angeles are taken for granted by the rest of us, but are not provided by Federal funds to our veterans.

WHO IS HELPED: Many citizens are moved to help our veterans with recovery from their wounds (physical as well as mental) and have bequeathed a substantial amount to support veterans for years to come. Examples include one fund which specifically supports the EX-POW/MIA Program, enabling these veterans to gather together and be recognized for their extreme sacrifice for their country each year, or specific donations which support families of Iraqi veterans, or donations that allow eligible veterans to enter a Work Therapy Program to speed their return to normal life, or funds that are earmarked to assist our women veterans. The Fisher House, a program which would build a facility to house families while their loved one (a veteran) is in treatment at the West Los Angeles facility, needs activation funds just to break ground and begin construction. These are just a few of the many earmarked funds that are now serving our veterans' needs daily. Please note: you may also donate funds that will benefit the VA West Los Angeles National Cemetery, or the Veterans Benefits Administration at 11000 Wilshire Blvd.; all are served by the Voluntary Service Program at the VA West Los Angeles Healthcare Center located at 11301 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90073

WHY YOU SHOULD HELP: Our veterans served in war situations that presented them with wounds and unspeakable mental horrors that have changed their lives forever, and prevented many of them from returning to a normal life. They served so that we could live in comfort in our American lifestyle, pursuing our economic and social dreams, while their dreams ended in health issues, mental illness, loss of jobs, families, and all means of support. They served for you. Now is your time to give back.

HOW TO GIVE: Your will can specify a bequest to serve veterans by instructing your Executor to allocate whatever amount you desire, for whatever purpose, to the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System. Your bequest correspondence should include any specific instructions to benefit a special population of veterans, or you may elect to simply have the funds deposited to the General Post Fund 1000, which is used to help any veteran in need under many different situations. Correspondence should be addressed to:

Voluntary Service (135)
VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System
11301 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90073

Once received, your bequest will be acknowledged by the Voluntary Service Department. Substantial bequests are frequently highlighted by a public presentation with the Director of the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System.

For more specifics on how to support veterans at our facility, please call the Chief, Voluntary Service at (310)268-4350.

Thank you for considering our proud United States veterans in your estate planning process. Donations like yours let our veterans know that their service to country is remembered, far beyond Veterans Day, or Memorial Day. **Every day** should be Veterans' Day at the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System, and gifts such as yours bring that ever closer to a reality for our patients.